

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 1604

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UN, PORG, PFOR
SUBJECT: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER ON CREATION OF UN POST
OF DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

REFS: A. PARIS 14833; B. STATE 117153

SUMMARY: FRENCH DEMARCHES IN PARIS AND WASHINGTON REFLECT THEIR PREOCCUPATION WITH MAINTAINING A FRENCH NATIONAL IN UN SECRETARIAT'S SENIOR ECONOMIC POSITION. THEY FEAR THAT IN ANY RESTRUCTURING THEIR WEAK RECORD WILL LEAD TO LOSS OF STATUS AND POWER. FRENCH ARE MISREPRESENTING GENERALIZED BUT EFFECTIVE US SUPPORT FOR REEXAMINING SYSTEM AS FIRM POSITION ON ONE ELEMENT OF IMPORTANCE TO THEM. RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE HAS ADJOURNED UNTIL SEPTEMBER TO GIVE CHAIRMAN AND DELEGATIONS TIME TO THINK THROUGH VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HERE AT USUN ARE SOMEWHAT DISMAYED AT CONSISTENT LACK OF FACTUALITY AND LOGIC IN THE TACTICS WHICH THE FRENCH PURSUED IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN A PERSON (VAN LAETHEM) AND KEEP THEIR GRIP ON A POSITION (UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS) UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH HAVE
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PROVED TO BE UNSATISFACTORY TO MOST OF THEIR ALLIES, THE EASTERN EUROPEANS, AND THE G-77. THE IDEA OF THE POST OF A "DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS" FORMALLY SURFACED IN THE REPORT ENTITLED "A NEW UNITED NATIONS STRUCTURE FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION" (DOCUMENT E/AC.62/9 OF MAY 28, 1975), DRAFTED LARGELY BY AMBASSADOR RICHARD N. GARDNER. FAR FROM BEING REJECTED,

THE REPORT WAS WARMLY WELCOMED BY THE WESTERN EUROPEANS AND BY OTHER GROUPS AS A FAR-REACHING AND RATIONAL APPROACH TO THE REORDERING OF THE UN'S DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS. AT A TIME WHEN FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD HIMSELF WAS THE FRENCH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, THEY PARTICIPATED WITHOUT RESERVATION IN THE ADOPTION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3363 (VII-4) WHICH, IN ADDITION TO CREATING THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON RESTRUCTURING, CITES THE AFOREMENTIONED STUDY AS A PART OF THE WORKING DOCUMENTS OF THAT COMMITTEE. IN FACT, IT WAS THE WIDESPREAD ENDORSEMENT BY THE WEO'S WHICH AROUSED THE SUSPICIONS OF THE G-77 AND RESULTED IN A RETICENCE TO CONSIDER THE SO-CALLED GROUP OF 25 REPORT AS THE POLITICAL BASIS FOR THE RESTRUCTURING OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

2. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOTE THAT IN ADDITION TO THAT SUPPORT INFORMALLY VOICED BY THE WEO'S FOR THE NEW SYSTEM FOR ESA, THE G-77 HAVE NOW FORMALLY PROPOSED THAT OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE SEPARATED FROM THE TRADITIONAL RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, AND COORDINATING FUNCTIONS OF ESA. THE CLEAR INTENTION IS THAT SUCH A SEPARATION WOULD IN PRINCIPLE TAKE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS FUNCTIONS OF THE UN OUT OF THE POLITICS OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ENHANCE THEIR ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S "SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE" IN IMPROVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS FOR MANKIND AS A WHOLE, E.G., UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE CREATION OF UNICEF, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, ETC. AT THE BUREAUCRATIC LEVEL THE G-77 AND THE NORDICS OBJECT STRENUOUSLY TO THE PRESENT

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SITUATION WITHIN ESA WHEREBY THE ONLY AFRICAN UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL IN THE UN SYSTEM IS MADE SUBORDINATE TO WHAT THEY REGARD AS AN UNSYMPATHETIC FRENCH UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL. MOREOVER, THERE IS A STRONGLY HELD FEELING THAT FRANCE, AS A PALTRY CONTRIBUTOR TO THE FINANCING OF THE UN SYSTEM SHOULD NOT HAVE A NATIONAL AS THE PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR THE DEPARTMENT WHICH CONTROLS APPROXIMATELY 80 PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE UN SECRETARIAT BUDGET. WHATEVER THE CALIBER OF THE EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT FOR AMBASSADOR VAN LAETHEM, IT MAY VERY WELL BE THAT AS A PUNITIVE MEASURE THE G-77 WILL WISH TO HAVE SOMEONE OTHER THAN FRENCH, WHETHER FROM A DEVELOPED OR A DEVELOPING COUNTRY, IN THAT POST AS A RESULT OF THE FRENCH RECORD AND CURRENT FRENCH TACTICS.

3. RATHER THAN THE TROIKA DANGER REFLECTED IN PARA 4 OF REFTTEL, THE CREATION OF A DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OR A DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION IS VIEWED BY ITS PROPONENTS AS HAVING

THE POTENTIAL OF BRINGING SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN, AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS UNDER A SINGLE EXECUTIVE AND POLICY HEAD, IN CONTRAST TO THE INEFFICIENT AND FRAGMENTED ARRANGEMENT WHICH HAS BEEN PERMITTED TO COME INTO EXISTENCE UNDER THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP. WITH RESPECT TO THE LEGALITY QUESTION, THE PROPOSAL TO CREATE A DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OR A DIRECTOR GENERAL AS ENVISIONED IN SEVERAL WORKING DOCUMENTS DOES NOT REQUIRE OR EVEN SUGGEST ANY AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER. THE CRY OF CHARTER AMENDMENT IS ANOTHER TRANSPARENT BOGEY: ARTICLE S97-101 ARE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCOMODATE ANY RESTRUCTURING SO LONG AS THE SINGLE SYG AND AN INDEPENDENT SECRETARIAT REMAIN.

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4. FORMALLY, THE PRESENT SESSION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE HAS MET ONLY TWICE AND HAS NOT REACHED SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUSIONS. NOR HAVE FORMAL POSITIONS BEEN TAKEN BY THE US PARTICIPANTS OR MOST OTHERS. AT OUR INSTIGATION, A "FRIENDS OF THE CHAIRMAN" ARRANGEMENT WAS CREATED WHEREBY A SMALL GROUP OF QUALIFIED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SEVERAL GEOGRAPHIC GROUPS HAVE MET AT GREAT LENGTH. THEY HAVE EXAMINED IN DEPTH THE RESTRUCTURING ISSUES AND BEGUN TO CONSTRUCT PAPERS WHICH WILL, IN DUE COURSE, (SEVERAL MONTHS FROM NOW) BE PRESENTED FORMALLY TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON RESTRUCTURING FOR CONSIDERATION. INCLUDED IN THOSE PAPERS WILL BE THE FORMAL PROPOSAL OF THE G-77 FOR THE CREATION OF THE POST OF DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AS WELL AS PROPOSALS FROM OTHERS INCLUDING THE US. THE D.G. IDEA IS SUPPORTED BY A BROAD RANGE OF DELEGATIONS AND VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED BY THE EASTERN EUROPEANS. IN THE

COURSE OF THOSE CONSULTATIONS, AND IN LINE WITH INSTRUCTIONS, WE HAVE CONFINED OURSELVES TO SAYING THAT WE WILL VIEW WITH SYMPATHY THE PROPOSAL OF THE G-77 TO INCLUDE THIS RECOMMENDATION IN WHAT IS SUBMITTED ULTIMATELY FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. NOTHING AGREED TO IN THE COURSE OF ASSEMBLING THESE PROPOSALS HAS COMMITTED THE US TO POSITIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE RESTRUCTURING VARIANTS
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PROPOSED. IN FACT, WHEN THE SESSION CONCLUDED MAY 20, THE US TOOK THE LEADERSHIP IN ASSURING THAT NO DELEGATION AT THIS STAGE SHOULD COMMIT ITSELF TO ANY RESTRUCTURING ISSUE. A SUMMARY PAPER IS TO BE PREPARED BY CHAIRMAN DADZIE AND INFORMALLY MADE AVAILABLE TO DELEGATIONS IN MID-JULY. THE RESTRUTURING PROPOSALS AS THEN AMENDED WILL BE REMANDED TO CAPITALS; THE FIRST OCCASION FOR AN INDICATION OF GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONS WILL ARISE AT A RESUMED SESSION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 6-9 AND AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN NOVEMBER.

5. WE AS WELL AS THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE G-77 (PAKISTAN) AND THE NORDICS AND THE CANADIANS HAVE SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME IN ATTEMPTING TO CLARIFY ERRONEOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF SUBSTANCE AND TACTICS BEING AGGRESSIVELY PURVEYED IN CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION WHICH HAS BEEN LED BY ONE CANDIDATE FOR VAN LAETHEM'S POSITION (MICHEL ROUGE). WE ALSO HAVE WORKED ASSIDUOUSLY IN HEADING OFF A TENDENCY AMONG THE G-77 TO LINK THE FRENCH INTRANSIGENCE ON REFORM OF THE UN SYSTEM TO THE ATMOSPHERICS WHICH WILL SURROUND CIEC.

6. ANY REORDERING OF SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE UN SYSTEM ULTIMATELY ALSO MAY INVOLVE A REALIGNMENT OF POWER INsofar AS EXECUTIVE AND PARLIAMENTARY ORGANS OF THE UN ARE CONCERNED. RECOGNIZING THIS, IT MAKES SENSE TO IDENTIFY THE VARIOUS MODALITIES FOR DEVELOPING A MORE EFFECTIVE SYSTEM AND ONLY AT THAT POINT TO REACH CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE REALIGNMENTS AT THE TOP WHICH SUCH CHANGES WOULD INVITE.

7. THE FRENCH HAVE TAKEN THE REVERSE POSITION AND ARE INSISTING NOW UPON GUARANTEES THAT THEIR POWER POSITION IN THE UN BE STAKED OUT IN PERPETUITY, AND THAT ALL MODIFICATIONS OF THE STATUS QUO BE BUILT AROUND ITS PRESERVATION. TO MAINTAIN SUCH AN ATTITUDE IS TO RUN THE SERIOUS RISK THAT NOT ONLY THE G-77 BUT MAJOR EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTORS
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TO THE UN WILL BE PROVOKED INTO VOTING THROUGH THE GA A REALIGNMENT OF THE UN ESA THOROUGHLY UNSATISFACTORY TO OTHER DONORS INCLUDING OURSELVES. WE BELIEVE WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN DE-ESCALATING THIS POSSIBILITY AND IN MAKING RESTRUCTURING A VEHICLE FOR IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE UN AS THE CIEC MINISTERIAL APPROACHES.

8. WITH REGARD TO WALDHEIM'S POSITION, IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT HE COMPLAINED TO LEONARD ON MAY 13 ABOUT UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE OF VAN LAETHEM, SPECIFICALLY HIS REPEATED ANTAGONIZING OF G-77, AND COMPLAINED ABOUT FRENCH PRESSURES TO MAINTAIN THEIR HOLD ON THAT POSITION. HE SAID PERM. REP. LEPRETTE HAS JUST CALLED ON HIM WITH ROUGE TO PUSH ROUGE CANDIDACY, BUT HAD LINGERED BEHIND TO ADD THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WAS PERSONALLY SEARCHING FOR A BETTER QUALIFIED, MORE SENIOR PERSON. LEONARD CONFINED HIMSELF TO SAYING THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISATISFACTION IN USG WITH PRESENT STRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE OF UN'S ECONOMIC SIDE, NOTING CRITICAL CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS. HE SUGGESTED WALDHEIM CONSIDER A SHAKEUP IN WHICH CONTINUED IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC POSTS AS PROPERTY OF ANY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT. WALDHEIM RESPONDED, "I WOULD DO IT, I WOULD DO IT". WE NOTE HE DID NOT SAY "I WILL" AND WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT DEVELOPMENT OF A BROAD CONSENSUS IN THE GA IS HIS IMPLIED PRECONDITION. SOVIETS, FRENCH AND PERHAPS SEVERAL OTHERS WILL TRY TO FRUSTRATE SUCH CONSENSUS. IF WE JOIN THEM, THE STATUS QUO MIGHT BE MAINTAINED FOR SOME TIME BUT WE SUGGEST OUR ENERGIES WOULD BETTER BE DIRECTED TOWARD DEVELOPMENT OF USEFUL CHANGES.
LEONARD

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